

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

REPORT

SUBJECT Epidemic of Asiatic Flu in Czechoslovakia, DATE DISTR. 14 MAY 1968
 Planned Injections for Control of Infantile
 Paralysis, and Miscellaneous Military NO. PAGES 1
 Medical Information REFERENCES RD

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ROUTING

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SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

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report dealing with the epidemic of
 Asiatic flu in Czechoslovakia, planned injections for control of
 infantile paralysis, and miscellaneous military medical information

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ARMY review completed.

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EPIDEMIC OF ASIATIC FLU IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1957, PLANNED INJECTIONS FOR
CONTROL OF INFANTILE PARALYSIS, AND MISCELLANEOUS MILITARY MEDICAL INFORMATION

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Summary : This report contains information on an epidemic of Asiatic flu in Czechoslovakia in 1957 and planned injections for the control of infantile paralysis in 1958. It also includes certain miscellaneous medical information on [REDACTED] treatment for influenza at a regimental dispensary, [REDACTED], immunization of military personnel, notification of next-of-kin in case of death, and military medical training. [REDACTED]

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EPIDEMIC OF ASIATIC FLU IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1957, PLANNED INJECTIONS FOR
CONTROL OF INFANTILE PARALYSIS, AND MISCELLANEOUS MILITARY MEDICAL INFORMATION

Introduction

[redacted] there was a widespread epidemic of Asiatic flu (*Asijská chřipka*) in Czechoslovakia from July to October 1957.

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A. EPIDEMIC OF ASIATIC FLU IN 1957

1. Origin of the Epidemic

The period of July and August was usually the time many people in Czechoslovakia, especially students, went on vacations, and an estimated 100,000 went to the Black Sea resort areas during July 1957. At that time there was a widespread epidemic of Asiatic flu in Rumania and Bulgaria. Some of the Czechoslovak tourists contracted this disease and then returned to Czechoslovakia.

2. Stages of the Epidemic

The first incidents of Asiatic flu in the PRAGUE area and the JANOVICE area were reported in early July 1957, and by the middle of August the epidemic was at its highest peak. It recessed in September and by the first part of October 1957, reported cases were negligible.

3. Symptoms of the Disease

A person who contracted this disease usually had a very high temperature of about 40 or 41 degrees centigrade, had a headache, and felt very weak. He was usually bedridden. After a three day period, the fever declined and the person began to feel better. After a week, he was well on his way to recovery.

Notification of a case of this disease was not required to be given to medical authorities, but because of the high temperature which ordinarily accompanied an attack of Asiatic flu, a doctor was usually summoned and medical records kept.

4. Percentage of the Population Affected by the Epidemic

Because of the gravity of the situation, the epidemic was a much discussed subject in PRAGUE, and from [redacted] articles in Czechoslovak newspapers, [redacted] approximately 50 percent of the population of PRAGUE was affected by this epidemic.

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[redacted] at JANOVICE

[redacted] about 60 percent of the troops were affected by the epidemic. The average age of the troops assigned to units in the JANOVICE area was 20 years. [redacted] the probable cause for the higher percentage of this disease among soldiers was because of the more strenuous activities in which they engaged.

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5. Mortality Rate

[redacted]
an unidentified medical brochure
stated that the mortality rate was about five percent of all people who contacted
Asiatic flu.

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6. Planned Immunization Program

[redacted] the Ministry of
Health was planning a program for 1958 to immunize the population against influenza
type diseases.

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B. PLANNED INJECTIONS FOR THE CONTROL OF INFANTILE PARALYSIS

[redacted], according to statistics,
a certain unidentified medical cycle indicated that the population of Czechoslovakia
would experience a great many cases of infantile paralysis (dětská obrna) in 1958.
The Ministry of Health was planning a program for preventing a widespread outbreak
of infantile paralysis, especially for children.

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[redacted] some type of injection would
be given.

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[redacted] experiments were being
conducted with monkeys to produce serum for protection against infantile paralysis.

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C. MISCELLANEOUS MILITARY MEDICAL INFORMATION

1. Treatment for Influenza at a Regimental Dispensary

[redacted] at JANOVICE,
the 10th Rifle Regt dispensary

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The dispensary was staffed by three doctors and four EM. Two of the doctors,
a captain and a lieutenant, were permanently assigned to the dispensary, while the
third, a corporal, was a reservist on active duty for two months. [redacted]
the doctors were well qualified and [redacted] the patients received excellent treatment.

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The EM were conscripts. One was a PFC and the others were privates. [redacted]
these EM had received five months of medical training at an unidentified
hospital in PILSEN.

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4. Notification of Next-of-Kin in Case of Death

All military personnel were required to have in their personal belongings a stamped envelope, with a blank sheet of paper enclosed, addressed to his next-of-kin and bearing his military return address. If a soldier was killed in battle, his comrades were supposed to write on the blank sheet of paper the circumstances of his death and mail it to his next-of-kin.

[redacted] Czechoslovak soldiers were not issued metallic identification tags.

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5. Military Medical Training

[redacted] five hours of medical training in the fundamentals of first aid, water purification, and the study of vitamins and calories.

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Trainees of the 10th Rifle Regt, 2d Rifle Div, received 28 hours of medical training during their normal training cycle. The training was given in two hour periods over a 14-day cycle and was conducted by an EM from the regimental dispensary.

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Comments

1. [redacted] a sign posted on the hospital building which read " 3 ON-PLZEN" [redacted] meant the Third District Hospital of PILSEN (3 okruhová nemocnice-PLZEN).

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